



Minutes of Castor Parish Council Meeting

Held on Thursday 5th October 2023 at 7.00pm in the Cedar Centre

The meeting was preceded by a presentation by Cabinet member Cllr. Andy Coles on the City Council Budget Simulator. Cllr. Coles explained the background and the continued need for the city council to fund a budget gap in the region of £5m. The purpose of the budget simulator being to encourage resident to express their preferences for where budget should be increased or reduced whilst reaching a balanced budget. Cllr. Coles encouraged the widest possible usage of the simulator and sought the support of the parish council in promoting awareness of the consultation exercise.

Parish council meeting

- 831 **PRESENT:** Cllr. Neil Boyce (Chairman), Cllr. Richard Anker, Cllr. William Baxter, Cllr. Steve Davies, Cllr. Gary Elliott, Cllr. Fiona Rowlands, Cllr David Shaw, Cllr. Dennis Surgeon Cllr. Terry Young. Four members of the public were also in attendance.
- 832 **APOLOGIES** – Cllr Anker had apologised for being unable to attend the early part of the meeting but arrived whilst planning matters were considered.
- 833 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – Cllrs. Richard Anker & Terry Young declared interest in Allotment matters on the agenda as Allotment holders.
- 834 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS** – We unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Thursday 7th September 2023 -. These were duly signed by the chairman.
Proposed Cllr. Fiona Rowlands and seconded Cllr. Steve Davies
- 835 **Matters arising from the previous minutes.** – None.
- 836 **Public Forum** – None raised at this point in the meeting.
- 837 **PLANNING AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS**
- a) **Local Plan Review Consultation** – Cllr. David Shaw reported that the parish council response to the consultation had gone in to the planning authority prior to the original closing date of 15th September. Feedback from the planning authority was that responses to the consultation exercise exceeded the level of that achieved in producing the current Local Plan. David also reported that in the previous Local plan there had been 13 staff in the planning policy team, there are currently just three. He noted that house building statistics had just been published showing 772 completions in the year, the lowest since 2013.
 - b) **Joint Community Action Plan (JCAP)** – We noted the current version of the plan which is due for discussion with Ailsworth PC on 9th November.
 - c) **Neighbourhood Planning (NP)** – Cllr. Shaw reported that he and the Chairman had met with the NP officer at the planning authority and that the minor revisions to both Castor and Ailsworth NPs had been submitted. Receipt of these had been acknowledged with a response that the planning authority would examine these amendments “In the next few weeks”.
 - d) **Status report** – The clerk reported that there was no change to the report issued for the September meeting of the parish council and that the matters considered at this meeting would be added to the report prior to the November meeting.

e) **Planning applications –**

- i. **23/01302/DISCHG** - 14 Peterborough Road - Discharge of condition C3 (external materials). We noted that this item is reported purely for information as the parish council is not consulted on discharge of conditions. Cllr Baxter reported that the wall to the site had been damaged by the contractor. It was considered to be a part of the “street scene” and he was pleased to report that the wall is to be re-instated.
- ii. **23/01302/CTR** – Application by Aragon for tree works on highways in a number of parishes with conservation areas. The application included three trees in Castor. One of the trees was the tree outside the Royal Oak Public House. We considered that this tree is highly significant to the street scene, and possibly THE most important tree in the village. The tree is in good condition and whilst we recognise the need for pedestrian and cyclist safety, we also want the least possible work to be carried out on the tree. With that in mind we asked the clerk to seek a meeting on the site with the Aragon tree team prior to any work being commenced.

f) **Planning Appeal – 10 Allotment Lane** – we noted the outcome of this planning appeal and that the inspector had dismissed the appeal in relation to the pagoda but had allowed all other aspects of the planning application.

g) **Woodlands – Standing Item** – Cllr. Shaw reported that there were a number of technical reports submitted since our last meeting.

- A traffic report that ignored traffic generated by extension to the care home, or traffic generated by additional Tennis courts & Bowling Green.
- A drainage report with objections from the drainage authority and
- A noise report with objection from Pollution control. Despite these the planning application is still to be determined.

We **RESOLVED** to delegate, to Cllr. Shaw and the Clerk, consideration of an additional observation by the parish council to be submitted to the planning authority on these additional technical reports.

Proposed Cllr. Neil Boyce Seconded Cllr. Dennis Surgeon.

838 LAND & ALLOTMENTS:

- i. **Cricket Club** – Proposed Lease – The Chairman reported on discussion with the solicitor representing the parish council and his view that the concerns of the club could be addressed. The generator fuel could be stored as long as it was in a BS approved container. The club had agreed the revised level of rent. The remaining concerns were over the tree maintenance and assurances that there are no outstanding works or inspections required.
- ii. **Allotment Tenancy Agreement** - The Clerk had reported that at least 9 allotment holders had either signed and returned copies of the revised lease or provided written acceptance of the contents and also paid the rent due under those agreements. We also **RESOLVED** to approve the attendance of Cllr Young on an allotment related course.

Proposed Cllr. Fiona Rowlands seconded Cllr. Steve Davies

iii. **Allotment Lane Post and Parking issue-** The chairman reported receipt of a quote of £604.80 to remove bollards. We **RESOLVED** to accept that quote and to also seek a solution to the problem of dirt hampering the locking mechanism of the dropdown bollards restricting access to the allotment site and Tweentowns.

Proposed Cllr. William Baxter Seconded Cllr. Terry Young

iv. **Tweentowns Water Supply** – We deferred further consideration of the request for a water supply until we have finalised discussions with Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) on the future of the site.

v. **Parish Councillors observations regarding Land & Allotment** – We requested the Clerk write on behalf of the parish council to Thorpe Wood Rangers, Reform, The Care Home and the Primary school asking them to urge visitors to observe the 20mph restrictions applicable in the village.

839 HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY – We noted the condition of the footpath between Thorolds Way and Casworth Way, partly in Castor and partly in Ailsworth. We agreed to refer this to JPLG meeting with a view to a joint approach to the city council as this is a public right of way and the responsibility of the city council

840 COMMUNITY MATTERS –

- a) **Joint Parish Liaison Group (JPLG)** – We approved, without amendment, the terms of reference for these meetings with Ailsworth Parish Council and also requested that the footpath (referenced above in minute 839), together with funding for the Christmas tree at the C&A village Hall be added to the agenda for the meeting scheduled to take place on 9th November.
- b) **Langdyke Trust - Nature Recovery Project (NRP)** –
- i. The chairman reported the receipt of invoices from Gary Archer for work done on the access road and gateway to the paddock Splash Lane together with two cuts & collect at the Splash Lane Paddock. We **RESOLVED** to approve the payment of those invoices totalling £5000.00.
Proposed Cllr. Neil Boyce seconded Cllr. David Shaw
 - ii. Gary Archer had also submitted a proforma invoice for £10,995.00 in advance of purchasing material and budgeting for the remaining fencing, gates and other work scheduled for the Splash Lane Paddock. Mike Horne had submitted an itemised quote in support of the remaining scheduled work. We agreed to arrange a meeting with Mike Horne, with a view to establishing more detail, before seeking additional quotes from other contractors for this work.
 - iii. Tweentowns – We were informed that Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) were willing to take on the lease of Tweentowns under a ten year agreement for use as a tree nursery and would undertake site improvement works including Deer fencing and planting wild flowers to the west of the site. They would require a steel container at the end of the tree line, the East of the site used for trees. We **RESOLVED** to give the current tenant notice to leave the site with a view to agreeing financial terms with PECT to occupy the site as a tree nursery on a ten year lease arrangement.
Proposed Cllr. Neil Boyce Seconded Cllr. David Shaw
- c) **Ferryfields** – We had before us the detailed quotation from NJ Pacey for work required at the location of the bathing area within Ferryfields. We unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the tender and authorised the appointment of NJ Pacey to carry out the work.
Proposed Cllr. Wm Baxter Seconded Cllr. Terry Young
- d) **Standing Stones & Information Boards** – there was no update from the position recorded in our previous minutes.
- e) **Playground re-instatement** – The Chairman reported that the work to reinstate the pirate ship and other works by Kompan had been delayed until the Monday following our meeting. The chairman reported the additional Kompan quotes for variations to the equipment by adding some optional features and some additional ground work. We declined to accept these quotes and would seek alternative quotes for the ground work elements
- f) **Parish Walk** – we considered again the comprehensive report from the walk and agreed to write to a tenant requesting that a hedge be cut. To advise householders backing the wall alongside the Village Green that there were signs of deterioration to their wall which should be monitored. We also asked the Clerk to request Highways to attend to the overgrown footpath on part of Peterborough Road
- g) **Short term CCTV rental** – The Chairman reported attending the webinar and his conclusion that these devices were aimed more at the larger councils and we agreed that there should be no further action taken.
- H) **Village Defibrillator** – The clerk reported receipt of emails originating from Community Heartbeat Trust (CHBT) and forwarded by Halls Chemist who carry out the regular monitoring checks. The emails requested “donations” of £300 for three years “VETS system” support. We unanimously agreed that CHBT should be paid £300. The chairman raised concerns that the equipment is not registered on “Circuit” and asked that this be followed up with Halls Chemist and CHBT. We agreed to ask Halls Chemist to continue to carry out the checks and if appropriate offer payment for the service

- i) **Remembrance 2023** – The Clerk reported that he had been in touch with the poppy shop to order the Lamp post poppies and awaited their banking details to make the payment.

841 GOVERNANCE MATTERS –

- i. **Banking arrangements** – The Clerk reported that having monitored the balances on our current account and Instant access account he had given notice to withdraw £20,000 of the £85,000 held on a 95day notice account. We approved the actions of the Clerk in ensuring sufficient funds available to fund Parish council actions
- ii. **Insurance renewal.** Cllr. Surgeon had confirmed that on his examination of the insurance tenders Zurich offered the best value for money and provided adequate cover matching the majority of the requirements set out in our “Invitation to Tender” document. Furthermore, Zurich were also cheapest if we entered in to a three-year “Long Term Agreement” (LTA). As cover had started before this meeting we had delegated to the Chairman, in conjunction with Cllr. Dennis Surgeon and the Clerk authority to accept the tender representing best value. We unanimously RESOLVED to retrospectively appoint Zurich, on a 3-year LTA, as our insurers on the terms in their tender submission.

Proposed Cllr. Neil Boyce Seconded Cllr. William Baxter

842 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE. – None other than those covered on the agenda

843 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- i. Review of Cricket Club Lease
ii. Splash Lane Paddock nature recovery work – consideration of alternative quotes
iii. Tweentowns - negotiations with PECT

844 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – scheduled to take place on 2nd November at 7pm in the Cedar Centre



Clerk & RFO 10th October 2023

Meeting Closed at 9.48pm

APPROVED BY CASTOR PARISH COUNCIL		
Signature of Chairman of approving meeting:		2ND NOVEMBER 2023